AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for facilitating network-initiated bearer setup of a bearer between a communication node and a correspondent node, said bearer being a connection to at least a mobile node and including factors that affect data transmission on the connection, through operation of a selected bearer manager, the bearer manager to control bearer setup and to create bearers, wherein the communication node is selectably operable to communicate by means of a communication network with the correspondent node, comprising:

a first bearer setup request generator associated with a first application-level entity, said first bearer setup request generator configured to generate a first application-level bearer setup request and to provide the first application-level bearer setup request to a transport-level entity, the first bearer setup request for requesting the selected bearer manager to create the bearer between the communication node and the correspondent node, and the first bearer setup request, when generated at the first application-level entity, being free of a network address identifying the network location of the selected bearer manager.

2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the communication network comprises an application level and a transport level, wherein the first application-level entity forms a portion of the application level, and wherein said first bearer setup request generator forms a portion of the application level.

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2 wherein the transport-level entity is separate from the first application-level entity.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 3 wherein the transport-level entity comprises an AAA (Authentication Authorization Accounting) entity, and wherein the first

bearer setup request generated by said first bearer setup request generator is sent to the AAA entity.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~The apparatus of claim 4, further comprising~~ An apparatus for facilitating network-initiated bearer setup of a bearer between a communication node and a correspondent node, said bearer being a connection to at least a mobile node and including factors that affect data transmission on the connection, through operation of a selected bearer manager, the bearer manager to control bearer setup and to create bearers, wherein the communication node is selectably operable to communicate by means of a communication network with the correspondent node, comprising:

a first bearer setup request generator associated with a first application-level entity, said first bearer setup request generator configured to generate a first application-level bearer setup request and to provide the first application-level bearer setup request to a transport-level entity, the first bearer setup request for requesting the selected bearer manager to create the bearer between the communication node and the correspondent node, and the first bearer setup request, when generated at the first application-level entity, being free of a network address identifying the network location of the selected bearer manager; and

a second bearer setup request generator associated with [the] an AAA entity and coupled to receive an indication of the first bearer setup request generated by said first bearer setup request generator, said second bearer request generator to generate a transport-level bearer setup request, the transport-level bearer setup request for delivery to the selected bearer manager to request the selected bearer manager, when delivered thereat, to create the bearer between the communication node and the correspondent node.

6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 5 wherein the communication network comprises a first network portion and at least a second network portion, the first network portion defining a home network of the communication node, and the second network portion defining a visited network of the communication node, and wherein the first application-level entity with which said first bearer setup request generator is associated and the AAA entity with which said transport-level bearer setup request generator is associated are positioned within the visited

network portion.

7. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 5 wherein the communication network comprises a first network portion and at least a second network portion, the first network portion defining a home network of the communication node, and the second network portion defining a visited network portion, and wherein the at least the first application-level entity comprises a first application server and a second application server, the second application server also forming a portion of the application level, the second application server associated with the home network portion, said first bearer setup request generator to generate the first bearer setup request responsive to an application-level signal provided thereto.

8. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the AAA entity comprises a home-network AAA entity and a visited network AAA entity, and wherein the first bearer setup request is sent by said first bearer setup request generator to the home-network AAA entity.

9. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 8 wherein said second bearer setup request message generator is to generate the transport-level bearer setup request by way of the visited-network AAA entity to the selected bearer manager.

10. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the transport-level bearer setup request message to be generated by said second bearer setup request message generator comprises an AAA-protocol message.

11. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 10 wherein the selected bearer manager to which the transport-level bearer request is to be delivered is to generate a response message, and wherein said second bearer setup request generator is further to detect the response message.

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 11 wherein the response message to be generated by the selected bearer forms an AAA-protocol message.

13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 11 wherein said second bearer setup request generator is further to return an indication of the response message to said first bearer setup request generator.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein said first bearer setup request message generator is further to generate an application-level message for communication to the communication node, the application-level message indicative of said response message.

15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the communication system comprises a radio communication system, and the communication node comprises a mobile node, wherein the communication system comprises a first network portion and at least a second network portion, the first network portion defining a home network of the mobile node, and the second network portion defining a visited network of the mobile node, wherein the first application-level entity comprises a home-network application server, and wherein said first bearer setup request generator is associated with the home-network server.

16. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the communication system comprises a radio communication system, and the communication node comprises a mobile node, wherein the communication system comprises a first network portion and at least a second network portion, the first network portion defining a home network of the mobile node, and the second network portion defining a visited network of the mobile node, wherein the first application-level entity comprises a visited-network application server, and wherein said first bearer setup request generator is associated with the visited-network server.

17. (Previously Presented) A method for facilitating network-initiated bearer setup of a bearer between a communication node and a correspondent node, said bearer being a connection to at least a mobile node and including factors that affect data transmission on the connection, through operation of a selected bearer manager, the bearer manager to control bearer setup and to create bearers, wherein the communication node is selectably operable to communicate by way of a communication network with the correspondent node, comprising:

selectably generating a first application-level bearer setup request at a first application-level entity, the first application-level bearer setup request for requesting the selected bearer manager to create the bearer between the communication node and the correspondent node, and the first bearer setup request, when generated at the first application-level entity, being free of a network address identifying the network location of the selected bearer manager; and

providing the first application-level bearer setup request, generated during said selectably generating, to a transport-level entity.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the first application-level entity comprises a first application server, and wherein the first bearer setup request generated during said selectably generating is generated at the first application server.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 further comprising routing, from the transport-level entity, a separate-level signaling-layer request signal to the selected bearer manager.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19 further comprising returning a bearer-manager response message to the first application server.